in the course of which Setthathirath, faithful to his tactics, succeeded in escaping once again. Since the rainy season was approaching and the Burmese were without provisions, they had to go back towards Vientiane where they expected to be able to spend the winter. But they were so harrassed all along the road by the detachments which Setthathirath sent out on their heels that they regained Burma in all haste with their prisoners (August 1565). 643* 648* 726 175*

"In sum Bureng-Naung's efforts, in spite of splendid victories, remained without /88/ any final result. There were those who criticized the king of Lan-Xang for his way of waging war, but the latter knew the defensive resources which his vast country offered, covered as it was with forests and very sparsely cultivated. By constant elusion and by harrying the enemy when they advanced too far he did what very great captains have done under similar circumstances, and it would have been a great imprudence on his part to risk the salvation of the Thai race in formal battles" (1). /723/

1. Cf. Lefevre-Pontalis, op. cit. /"La lutte des Thais contre les Birmans au seizieme siecle." Revue indochinoise, 1914, Vol. XXII, Nos. 7-8./

Campaign of 1568-1569. The king of Burma thought that if he turned his arms against Ayuthya once more he would be more successful (2). The young Siamese prince Phra-Naret sent word to

2. The former king of Ayuthya, taken prisoner by Bureng-Naung, had entered a monastery in Ava and had played his role so well that he had been allowed to go on a pilgrimage to Ayuthya. He at once threw off his frock and actively seconded his son in preparing their resistance. /557/

Setthathirath, who hastily sent him reinforcements (1568), but the Laotians fell into an ambush prepared with the assistance of a Siamese turncoat named Oya-Ram and had to return home with all speed. The Siamese had to give up their anticipated revenge, but fortunately for them the /89/ Burmese army was anxious to deal with Setthathirath and did not linger in the region of Ayuthya, but moved towards the Mekong and Vientiane by forced marches.

Second Burmese invasion (1569-1570). The Laotian army was waiting for it at the river crossing and tried in vain to prevent it

they at least preserved their individuality and the prerogatives of 648*
their government. 175*

/98/ Xieng-Khouang, the capital, was then a large and beauti- 633
ful city whose numerous inhabitants were protected by an enclosure 175*
of deep moats and by forts which crowned the surrounding hillocks. 172
The immense stone jars scattered pell-mell over its plain in the
time when the Khas dominated the region (1) and "the wealth of

1. Legend has it that these jars were constructed by the /415/
aboriginal Khas. For what purpose? -- A mystery. They may originally have been storehouses which served to shelter provisions on a road which has been frequented in all periods by migrating peoples. Perhaps rather they were designed to collect rainwater. Perhaps, finally, these monumental vases were simply mausoleums in which offerings were piled up to the shades of the dead.

its sixty-two pagodas and of its shining Thats whose sides concealed treasures" had given it a renown which went far abroad.

Friendly relations were therefore resumed, as in the past, be- 648*
tween the two States. Lan-Xang was again preparing to live in 643*
peace in its rediscovered autonomy when Nokeo-Koumane died 175*
while still very young and without leaving any survivors, in 1596
after a five years' reign.

THAMMIKARATH (1582), KING 1596-1622.

New disorders were to be feared, /99/ /Page 99 is devoted to 643*
an illustration: "Tran-Ninh. The Plain of the Jars."--Translator/ 175*
/100/ and new competitions for the throne. Such was not the case,
for the moment, thanks to the authority of Vongsa, a cousin by
marriage of the dead king, who although was only fourteen years
old was able to rally the suffrage of the court to his name. His
mother was a sister of Setthathirath's last wife. The dynastic link
was thus rather tenuous and the local chronicles do not fail to point
out that on this date the power passed to the "junior" branch of the
Khoun-Lo succession.

Vongsa reigned under the name of Thammikarath. In 1598 a 557
son Oupagnouvarath was born to him, who had scarcely reached 643*
man's age when he developed a keen interest in the administration 175*
of his country. By virtue of his intelligence and his precocious
maturity of mind he soon acquired a genuine popularity both among

557 the people, and finally took a major part in the direction of the king-
643* dom's affairs. Thammikarath was wounded in his paternal pride,
175* would not countenance this premature interference in his royal prero-
/578/ gatives, and treated his son as a rebel (1621).

OUPAGNOUVARATH (1598), KING 1622-1623.

669 Supported by the majority of the ministers and by /101/ one of
578 his brothers, Mone-Keo, Oupagnouvarath entered into an open struggle
643* against his father, defeated the troops who had remained faithful to
175* the latter in bloody battles, and had himself proclaimed king in Vientiane on the "Sunday, first day of the crescent moon of the fourth month of the year 984" (1622). Three months later, Thammikarath was killed at his orders, together with his last partisans, in Pha-Deng. The epilogue of this somber family drama was not long in coming, for Oupagnouvarath died the following year under unknown circumstances.

662 With his death the intrigues for the crown began all over again,
175* and during a new period of nearly fifteen years, which the confusion of the Annals obscures as if intentionally, princes succeeded one another in Vientiane without any reference point for the chronicler and without any probable date which would make it possible to establish even an approximate chronology.

PHOTHISARAT II, KING 1623-1627.

643* We may nevertheless agree that it was one of Sene-Soulintha's sons
175* who seized power in 1623 under the name of Phothisarath (a fact which further complicates this imbroglio).

/102/ MONE-KEO, OUPAGNAOVARATH, TONE-KHAM, VISAI, KINGS 1627-1637.

The national dynasty resumed its prerogatives in 1627 with, successively, Oupagnouvarath's brother Mone-Keo, Mone-Keo's son named Oupagnaovarath (?), and finally with the latter's two sons Tone-Kham and Visai. The last-named died in 1637 (1).

648* 1. It was fortunate for Lan-Xang that the Burmese had been
175* driven back by the Thais of the Menam and had abandoned all action in the territories once subject to the rule of Bureng-Naung. If this had not been the case the historian of today would doubtless be somewhat more clear as to the events of the time, but Lan-Xang would certainly have sunk permanently into anarchy and into the partitioning which

Tax on rice, paddy, horns, hides, etc.

	Per picul (francs)	Per hundred kilograms (francs)
Paddy	0.25	0.416
Rice	0.50	0.832
Gum lac	2.50	4.16
Chinese nettle	2.50	4.16
Buffalo horns and hides	2.50	4.16
Buck horns and hides	3.75	6.25
Anteater scales	3.75	6.25
Cardamom	5.00	8.32
Elephant and tiger bones	3.75	6.25
Benzoin	12.50	20.82
Rubber	12.50	20.82
Wax	12.50	20.82
Ivory	50.00	83.20
Pirogues	ten percent ad valorem.	

Also to be added are certain incidental receipts, such as those arising from chancery fees or those collected by the native tribunals in conformity with the rates scheduled by the code of Vien-Tiane.

The royal treasury of Luang-Prabang subsidizes certain expenses, such as the upkeep of the kingdom's militia, of the native hospital in Luang-Prabang, of the Franco-Laotian school in Luang-Prabang, etc. [504]

Finally, the general budget of Indo-China pays out a variable sum annually for the purpose of balancing the receipts and expenditures of Laos.

C. Opium

One of the most important sources of Laotian revenue is provided by the sale of opium. The administration is responsible for the sale of this substance, which it manufactures itself and which is marketed by licensed merchants acting as middlemen.

Before 1900, Laos sold on its own behalf the opium which was allotted to it by the Cochinchina Customs and Excise Office (1),

(1) This was true only for Lower Laos. The opium sold in Upper Laos came from the Luang-Prabang distillery, which is no longer in operation today.